



PRESS RELEASE

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CONSULTATION ON INTERNET PRICING AT WHOLESALE AND RETAIL LEVEL

In accordance to the decision made by the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR) on the 10th of November 2017 and in pursuant to Order No.8 of 2017, TRBR approved a reduced price per Mbps per Month for the leased capacity through the submarine cable.

The TRBR intervention into this wholesale market of bandwidth is proven to have positive impact in the Vanuatu's telecom sector boosting demand of bandwidth by the Mobile operators, Internet Service Providers and the Government. This high demand has stimulated growth in mobile data traffic and internet usage resulting into significant growth of mobile data and fixed internet subscribers.

Though these impacts are visible as well as experienced, TRBR has received on several occasions, complaints from retailers of internet capacity on the high pricing of internet capacity supplied to the local market. Retailers of internet capacity claimed that these prices which are applied locally are excessive when compared to other countries in the region such as Tonga and Fiji, and hampers the development of the telecommunications/ICT industry in Vanuatu. On the other hand, TRBR also received concerns from the wholesaler of internet capacity claiming that the elasticity in the demand was not reflected through the pricing applied by the retailers and though the end users enjoy more value with more data allocated to bundles, the price tags remain the same, not catering for all users.

TRBR has not made any final or binding decision on any aspect of these complaints but wishes to release this consultation to obtain comments and further information from all its stakeholders and general public as users prior to any decision by TRBR.

Predominantly, the TRBR Act No.30 of 2009 as amended by Amendment 22 of 2018 provides TRBR general powers and functions to monitor and regulate Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting in order to promotion national social and economic development.

With that, this consultation aims;

- a) To ensure a regulatory environment that is fair, workable and promotes sustainable market competition and investment in internet services through capacity supplied from submarine cable.
- b) To address bandwidth pricing, TRBR intends to gather collective feedbacks from all its key stakeholders and general public as users to assist and enable TRBR to make a decision on pricing that is fair and promotes competition in the market.

- c) To identify and implement any proposed pricing mechanism for the international bandwidth per Megabit per Month from its stakeholders and general public. The proposed pricing must be justified where possible.
- d) To establish a regulatory regime that will foster an economically sustainable environment for local and foreign investors in the Telecommunications/ICT Sector.

On that note, TRBR welcomes and invites comments and feedbacks to this consultation document from its stakeholders including wholesalers, retailers and user or consumers of the internet capacity.

TRBR also wishes to reassure every interested parties that TRBR is not going to published or rely on any decision made by any service provider or individuals but seek collective views to assist the Regulator to move forward with its decision.

To access and provide comment on this consultation document, please contact TRBR office via;

- Email address consultation@trbr.vu
- Fax number: 24470
- Phone: 27621 or 27487
- Postal Address: PO Box 3547, Port Vila, Vanuatu
- Visit TRBR website <https://www.trbr.vu>

The deadline for all comments and feedbacks submission is **30th August 2019**